

# *Employee Satisfaction Survey Report*

*Prepared for:*  
**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES**

*Prepared by:*



***Juneau • Anchorage • Kodiak***

***April 2008***

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## Survey Purpose

The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) contracted with the McDowell Group, Inc. to conduct a survey of all Department staff. The purpose of the survey was to:

- Measure employee perceptions of the work environment
- Identify job satisfaction levels
- Identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement

McDowell Group is working with DOT&PF headquarters and regional management to use the survey results to identify specific actions to improve the organization's capacity to pursue its strategic goals.

McDowell Group is an Alaska research firm with offices in Juneau, Anchorage and Kodiak. Web-based survey management was performed by Fusion MR of Portland, Oregon. The research team worked with the DOT&PF Commissioner's Office to design the survey questions. The survey gathered information about employee satisfaction in eight main areas:

- Job Satisfaction
- Communications/Priorities
- Supervision/Involvement
- Recognition/Reward/Advancement
- Training/Mentoring
- Teamwork/Colleagues
- Mission/Motivation
- Workload/Resources

The survey also offered opportunities for respondents to provide their own ideas and comments.

## Methodology

The survey was fielded online through a website established specifically for that purpose. Fielding was conducted between January 23 and March 5, 2008. Employees were notified of the survey in advance by email from the Commissioner. Later, a second email contained instructions for logging on to the survey site. AMHS employees also received a written notice about the survey that was distributed with their pay warrants, followed with a postcard reminder. Two email reminders were distributed by means of the Department's email system.

This report concludes the first phase of the survey project. Subsequently, McDowell Group will conduct workshops with managers from each of the three main DOT&PF regions to help identify specific actions to improve satisfaction and productivity at DOT&PF. Some actions may be region-specific and others department-wide.

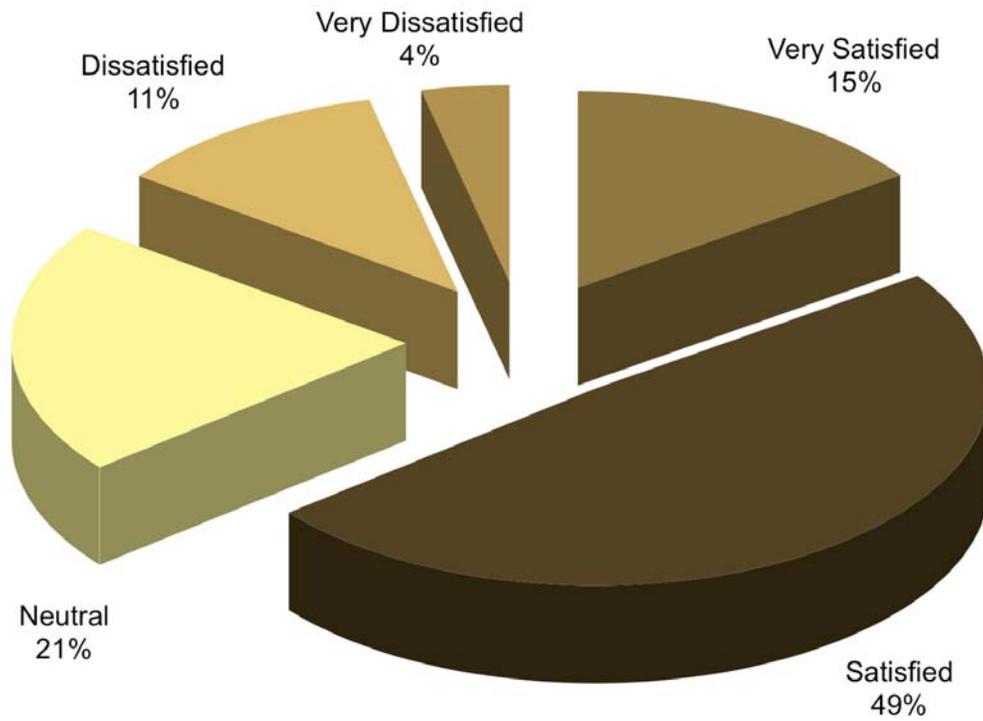
## **Response Rate**

The overall response rate was 39% (1,357 of 3,450 total employees). The sample is large enough to provide an accurate proxy for DOT&PF as a whole. The proportion of respondents by unit is close to the actual distribution of DOT&PF employees.

# Summary of Survey Responses

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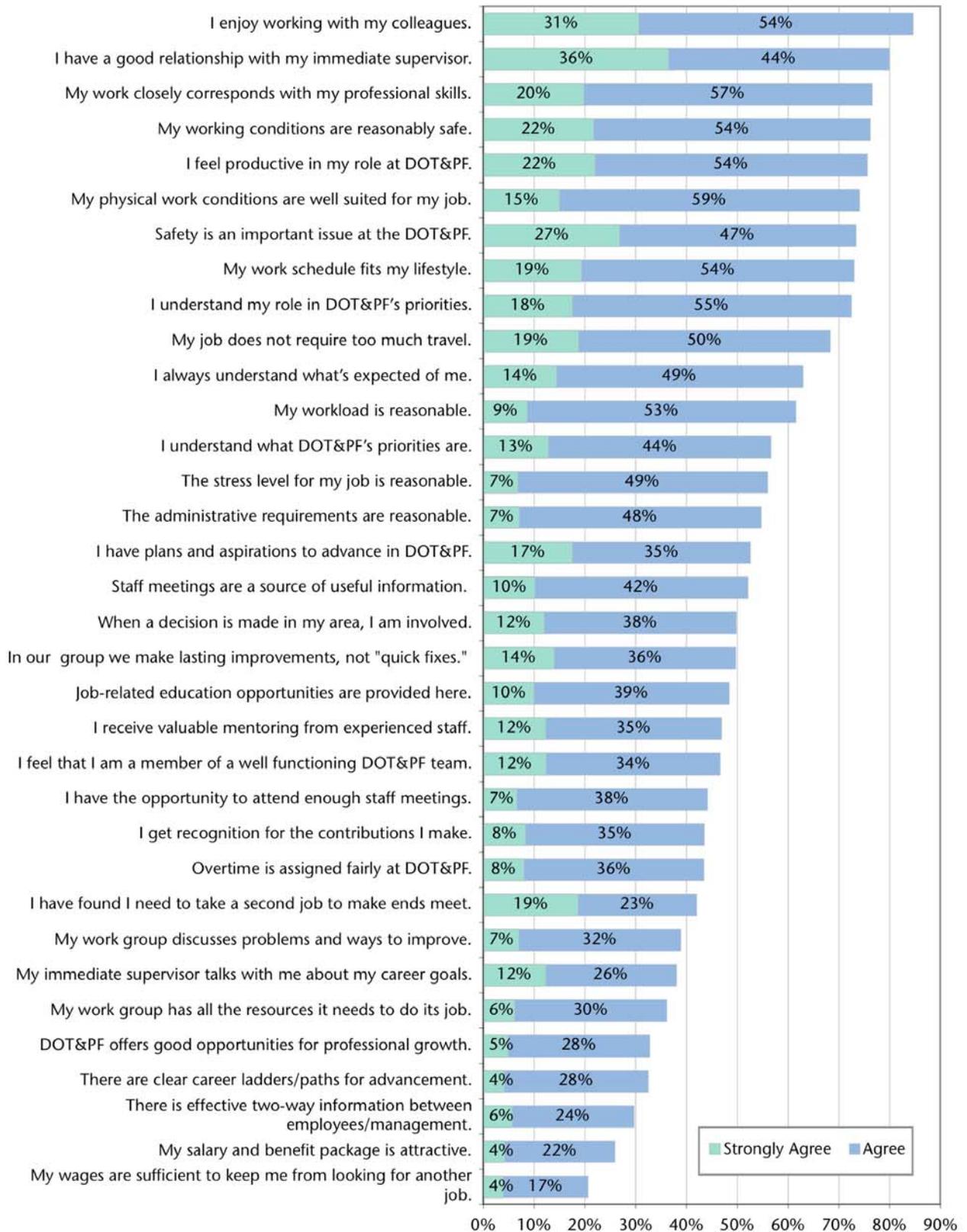
## 1. OVERALL, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR CURRENT JOB AT DOT&PF?



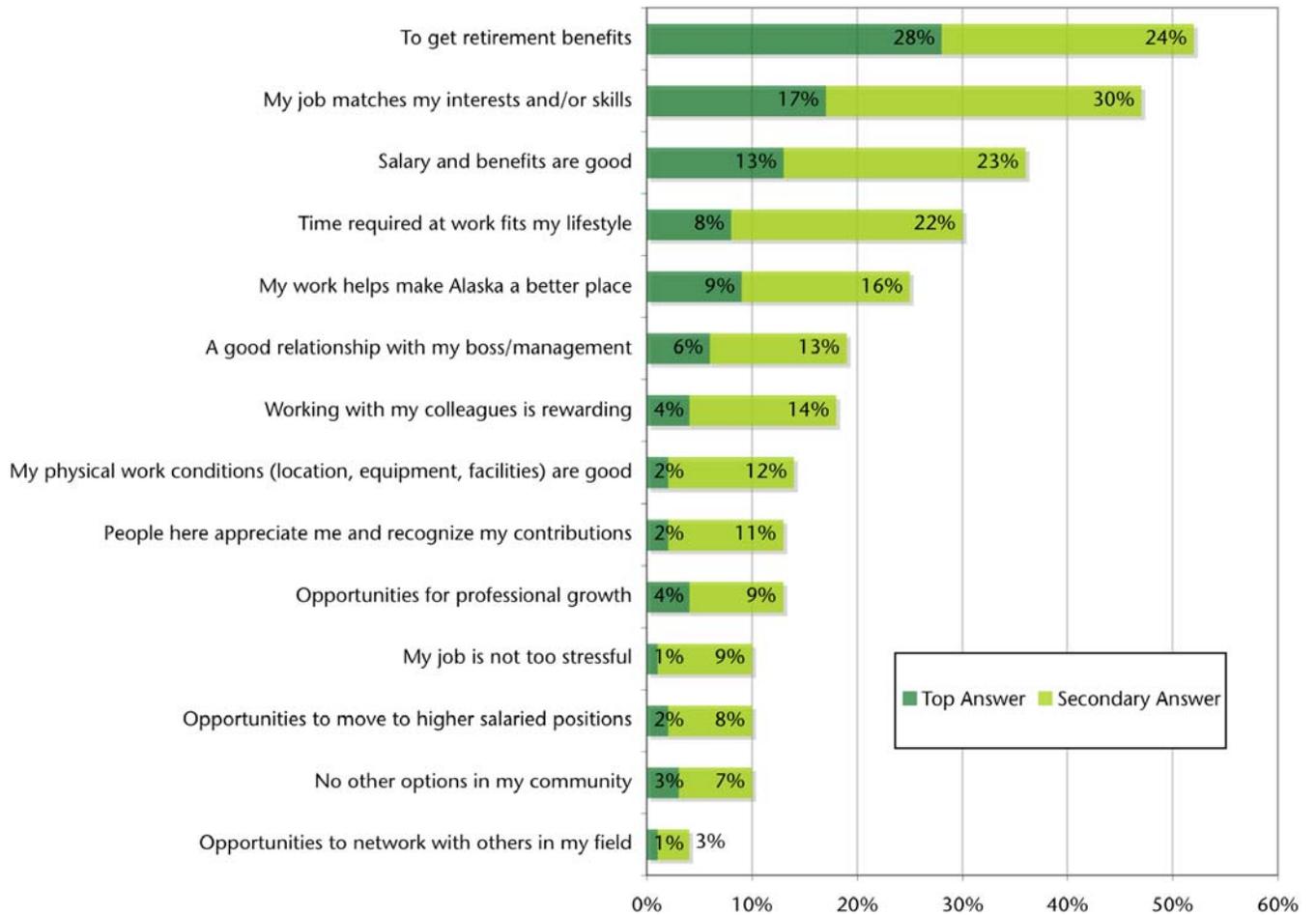
## 2. HOW STRONGLY DO YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS REGARDING YOUR PERSONAL WORK SITUATION AT DOT&PF?

|  | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| I enjoy working with my colleagues.  | 31%            | 54%   | 12%     | 3%       | 1%                |
| I have a good relationship with my immediate supervisor.   | 36             | 44    | 11      | 5        | 5                 |
| My work closely corresponds with my professional skills.   | 20             | 57    | 15      | 6        | 3                 |
| My working conditions are as safe as they can reasonably be.   | 22             | 54    | 13      | 7        | 4                 |
| I feel productive in my role at DOT&PF.  | 22             | 54    | 15      | 7        | 3                 |
| My physical work conditions are well suited for my job.  | 15             | 59    | 16      | 8        | 2                 |
| Safety is an important issue at the DOT&PF.  | 27             | 47    | 18      | 5        | 4                 |
| My work schedule fits my lifestyle.  | 19             | 54    | 16      | 7        | 4                 |
| I understand the role of my position in achieving DOT&PF's priorities.   | 18             | 55    | 16      | 8        | 4                 |
| My job does not require too much travel.   | 19             | 50    | 16      | 9        | 6                 |
| I always understand what's expected of me.   | 14             | 49    | 20      | 13       | 5                 |
| My workload is reasonable.   | 9              | 53    | 19      | 12       | 7                 |
| I understand what DOT&PF's priorities are.   | 13             | 44    | 19      | 15       | 9                 |
| The stress level for my job is reasonable.   | 7              | 49    | 20      | 15       | 9                 |
| The administrative requirements I am subject to are reasonable.  | 7              | 48    | 24      | 13       | 8                 |
| I have plans and aspirations to advance in DOT&PF.   | 17             | 35    | 31      | 10       | 6                 |
| Staff meetings are a source of useful information.   | 10             | 42    | 28      | 11       | 8                 |
| When a decision is made involving my area of responsibility, I am involved in the decision.                        | 12             | 38    | 20      | 20       | 10                |
| In our work group our priority is to find ways to make lasting improvements, rather than "quick fixes."            | 14             | 36    | 22      | 17       | 11                |
| Job-related education opportunities are provided here.   | 10             | 39    | 21      | 18       | 13                |
| I receive valuable mentoring from experienced staff.   | 12             | 35    | 24      | 16       | 13                |
| I feel that I am a member of a well functioning DOT&PF team.   | 12             | 34    | 23      | 19       | 12                |
| I have the opportunity to attend an adequate number of staff meetings.   | 7              | 38    | 26      | 18       | 12                |
| I get recognition for the contributions I make.  | 8              | 35    | 27      | 18       | 12                |
| Overtime is assigned fairly at DOT&PF.   | 8              | 36    | 31      | 13       | 12                |
| I have found I need to take a second job, or anticipate doing so, to make ends meet.                               | 19             | 23    | 24      | 24       | 9                 |
| My work group has regular discussions to review our performance, discuss common problems, or plan ways to improve. | 7              | 32    | 22      | 21       | 17                |
| My immediate supervisor makes an effort to talk with me about my career goals within the DOT&PF.                   | 12             | 26    | 26      | 20       | 15                |
| My work group has all the resources it needs to do its job.  | 6              | 30    | 21      | 27       | 16                |
| DOT&PF offers good opportunities for professional growth.  | 5              | 28    | 32      | 22       | 14                |
| There are clear career ladders/paths for advancement within the department.  | 4              | 28    | 24      | 25       | 18                |
| There is effective two-way information between employees and top management.                                       | 6              | 24    | 23      | 22       | 26                |
| My salary and benefit package is attractive.   | 4              | 22    | 27      | 27       | 20                |
| My wages are sufficient to keep me from looking for another job.   | 4              | 17    | 23      | 30       | 26                |

## SUMMARY OF PERSONAL WORK SITUATION RESPONSES—PERCENT WHO AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE

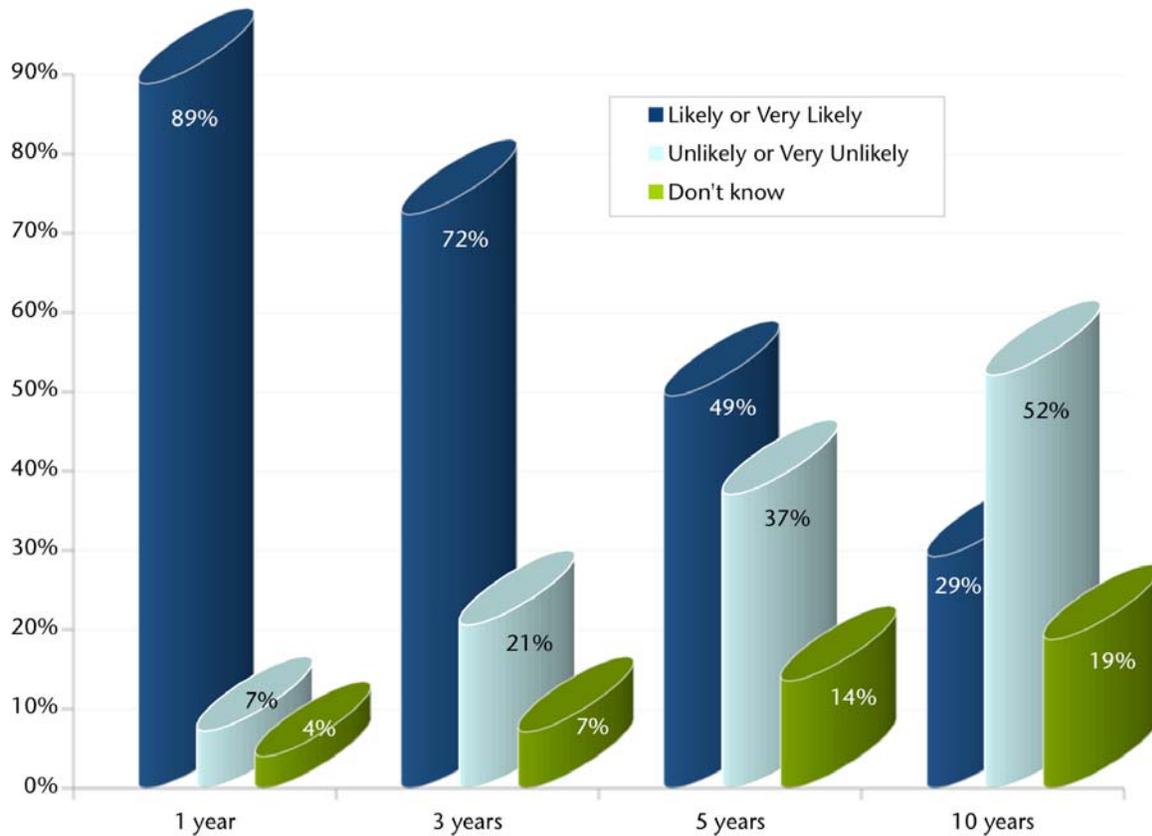


### 3. WHAT ARE THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT REASONS THAT YOU CONTINUE TO WORK FOR DOT&PF?



**Chart Description:** Employees were asked to provide three answers to this question. Their first answer is the “Top Answer”, and these numbers add up to 100%. The following two answers were combined as the “Secondary answer”, so secondary answers add up to 200% (two choices per employee). The entire chart adds up to 300%, representing all three responses.

#### 4. HOW LIKELY IS IT YOU WILL BE WORKING AT DOT&PF IN...?



**Note:** Of the 269 employees who said they are unlikely to be at DOT&PF in three years, 103 (38 percent) say that they are likely to retire in the next one-to-two years.

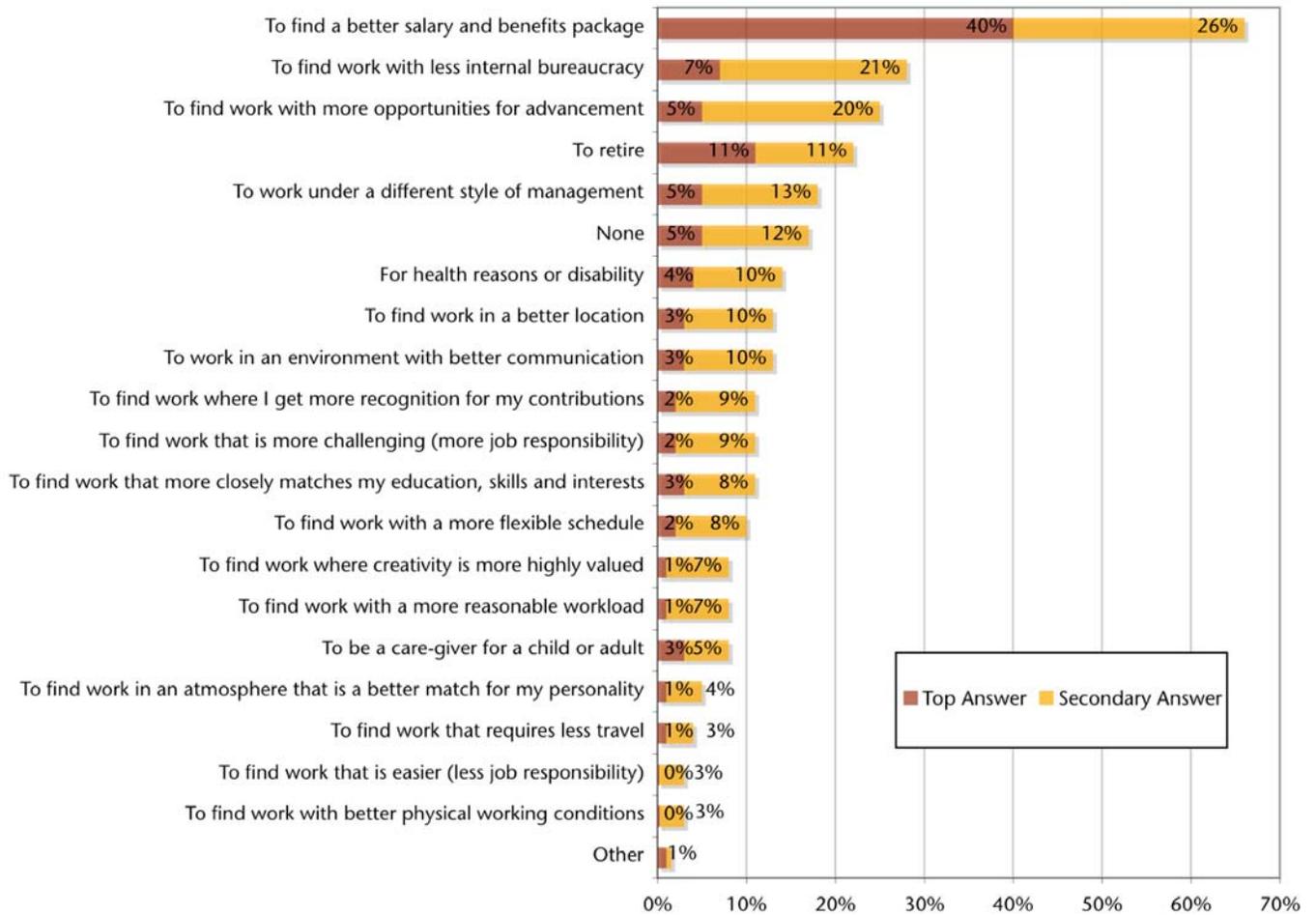
#### 4(A). I'M PLANNING TO RETIRE AS SOON AS I'M ELIGIBLE.

|            | Yes | No  |
|------------|-----|-----|
| Under 25   | 48% | 52% |
| 25 - 34    | 63  | 37  |
| 35 - 54    | 63  | 37  |
| 55 or over | 37  | 63  |
| Total      | 57  | 43  |

#### 5. ARE YOU ACTIVELY SEEKING A BETTER EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY?

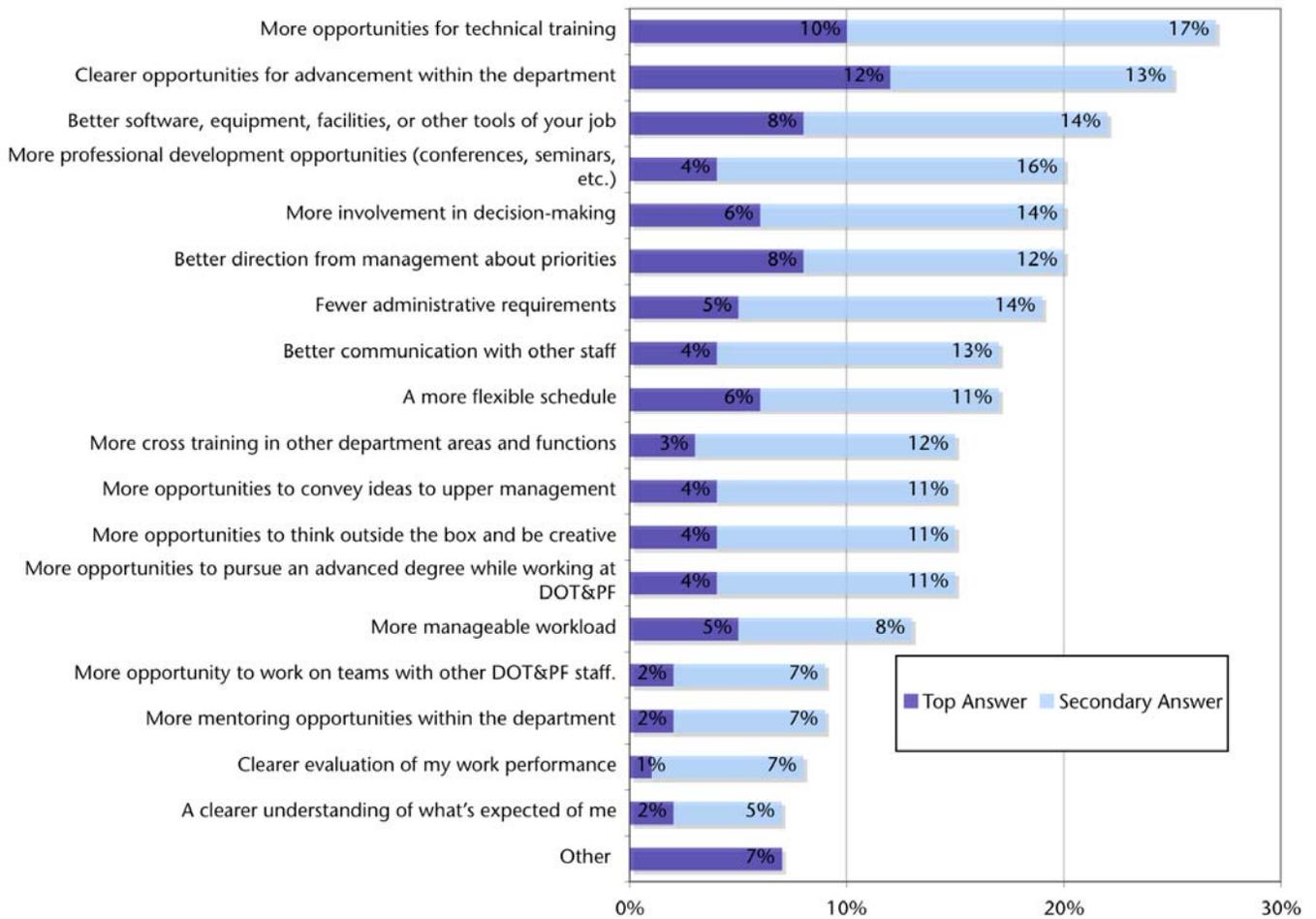
|                       | Percent |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Yes                   | 18%     |
| Yes, but not actively | 40      |
| No                    | 42      |

**6. WHAT ARE THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS THAT COULD CAUSE YOU TO LEAVE DOT&PF IN THE NEXT ONE-TO-TWO YEARS?**



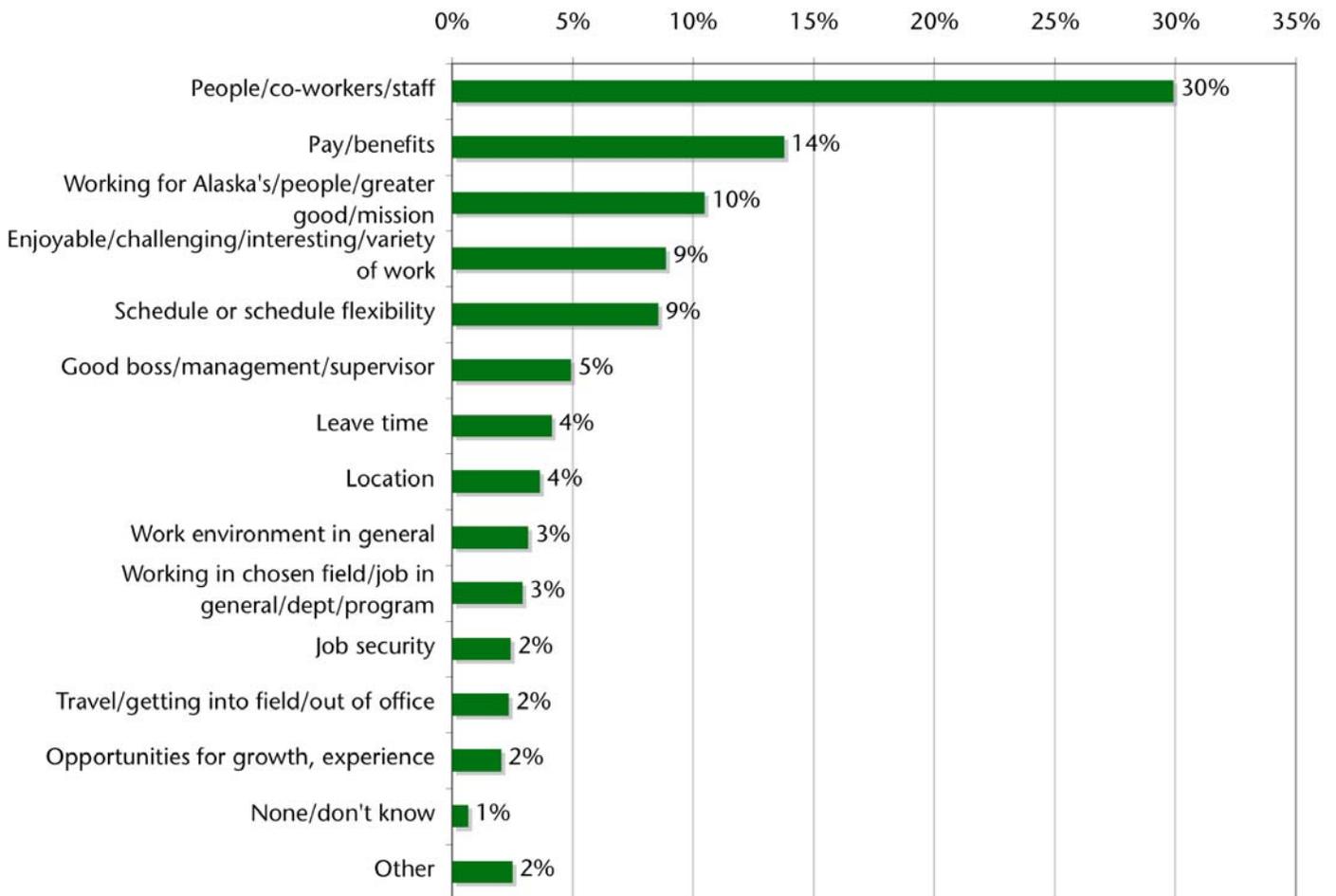
**Chart Description:** Employees were asked to provide three answers to this question. Their first answer is the “Top Answer”, and these numbers add up to 100%. The following two answers were combined as the “Secondary answer”, so secondary answers add up to 200% (two choices per employee). The entire chart adds up to 300%, representing all three responses.

## 7. WHAT ARE THE THREE FACTORS THAT WOULD MOST IMPROVE YOUR PERSONAL WORKING SITUATION AT DOT&PF?



**Chart Description:** Employees were asked to provide three answers to this question. Their first answer is the “Top Answer”, and these numbers add up to 100%. The following two answers were combined as the “Secondary answer”, so secondary answers add up to 200% (two choices per employee). The entire chart adds up to 300%, representing all three responses.

## 8. WHAT IS THE BEST THING ABOUT WORKING AT DOT&PF?

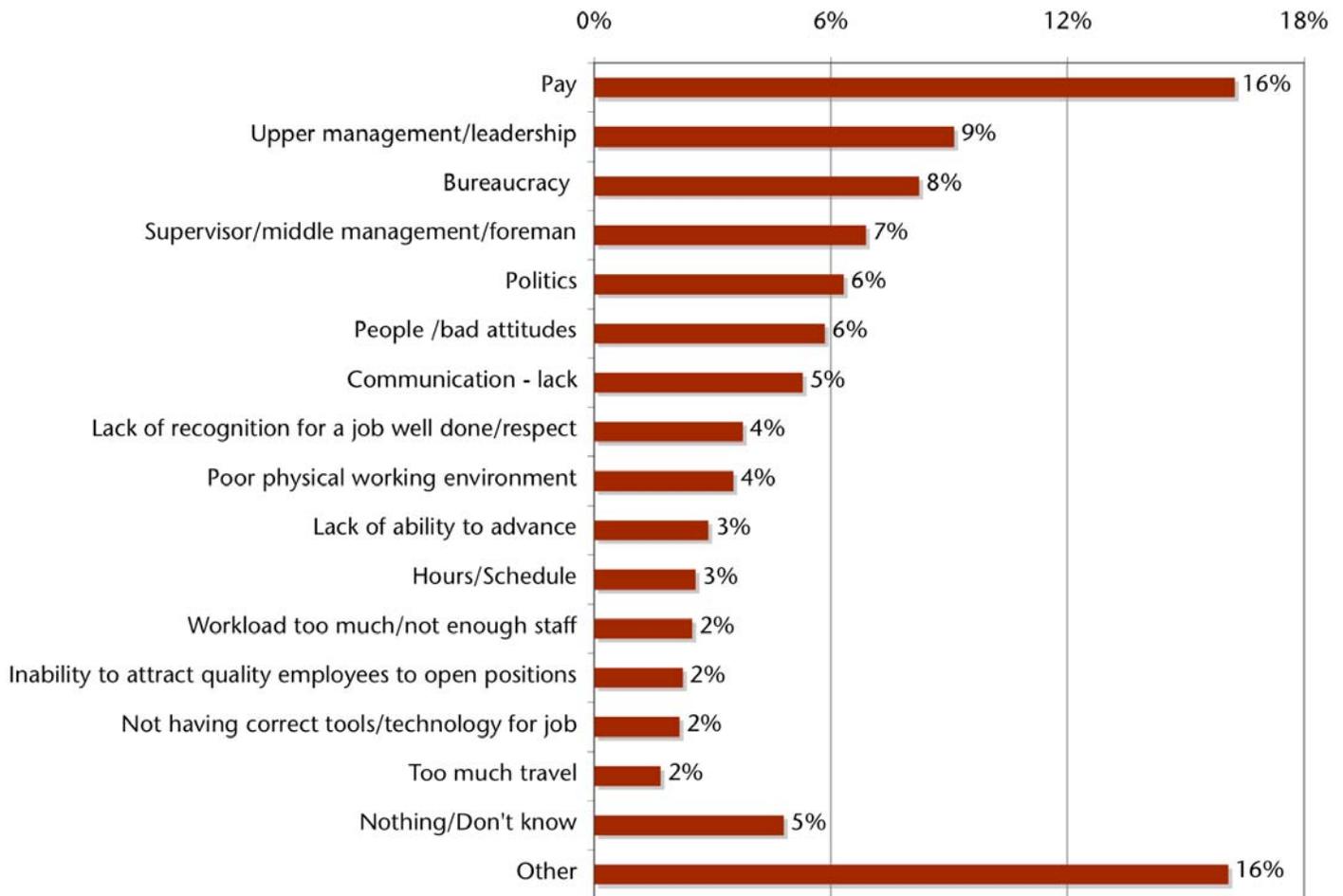


**Chart Description:** The chart is a compilation of responses to an open-ended question. If employees provided multiple answers to the questions, only their first response is included in the chart.

**“Other” Includes:** Customers (0.7%); Lack of stress (0.6%); “other” others (1.2%).

**Other Notes:** “People/co-workers/staff” includes Teamwork (0.7%); “Schedule or schedule flexibility” combines Flexible schedule (3.4%) and Schedule/hours (5.1%); “Good boss/management/supervisor” includes Lack of micro-management (1.0%) and I am recognized and appreciated (0.6%).

## 9. WHAT IS THE WORST THING ABOUT WORKING FOR DOT&PF?

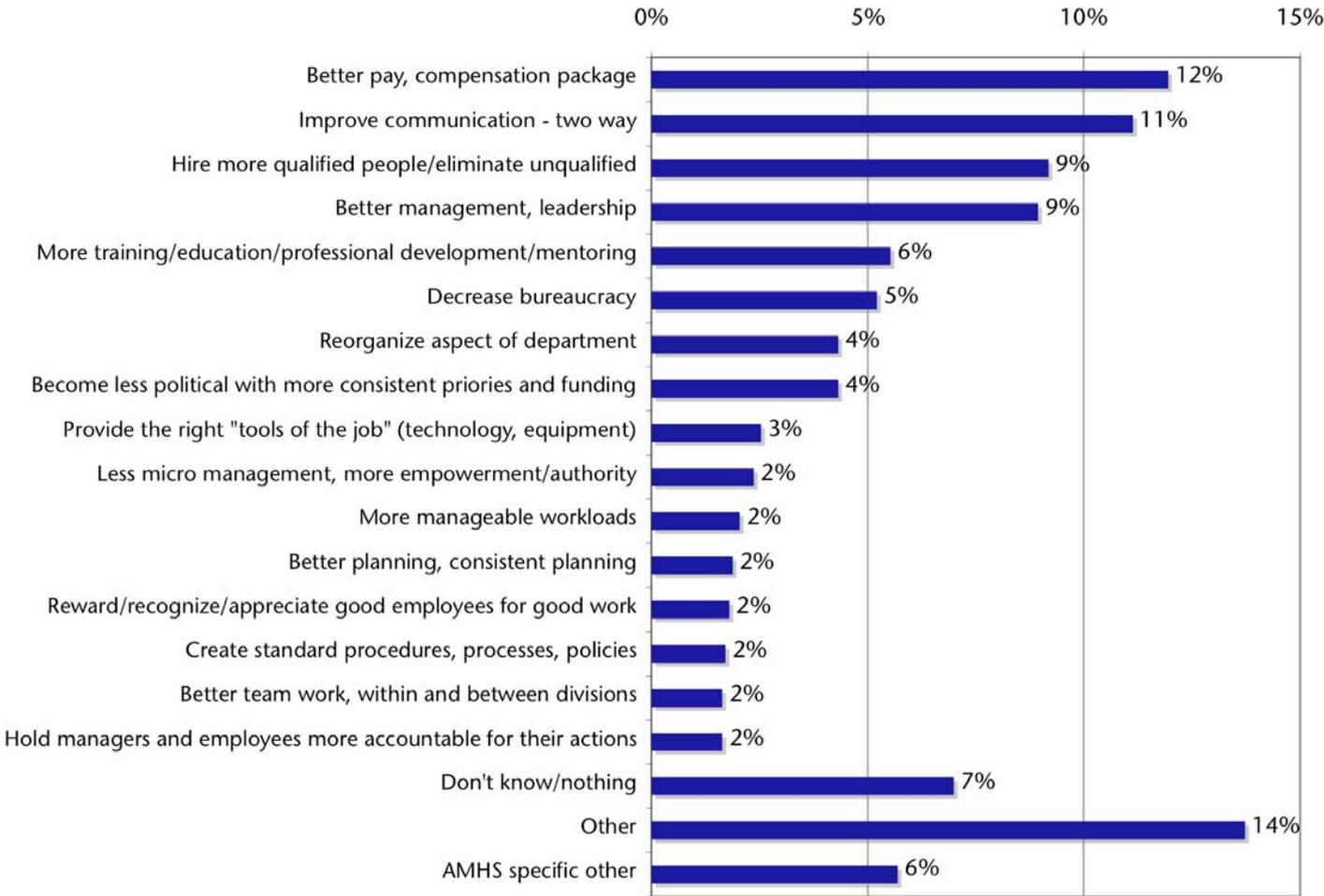


**Chart Description:** The chart is a compilation of responses to an open-ended question. If employees provided multiple answers to the questions, only their first response is included in the chart.

**“Other” Includes:** Budget issues/lack of funding certainty (1.6%); Negative public perception (1.6%); Lack of training (1.6%); AMHS specific issues (1.6%); DOT too huge/not well organized (1.4%); Lack of job security (1.1%); Lack of quality planning (0.8%); Benefits (0.9%); Location of job (0.7%); Stress (0.6%); Contractor issues (0.6%); Unions 0.5%; “Other” other (3%).

**Other Notes:** “Hours/Schedule” includes Not enough hours; Seasonality of work; Lack of flexible hours.

**10. IF YOU COULD DO ONE THING TO MAKE DOT&PF MORE EFFECTIVE OVERALL, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**



**Chart Description:** The chart is a compilation of responses to an open-ended question. If employees provided multiple answers to the questions, only their first response is included in the chart.

**“Other” Includes:** Address low morale (1.5%); Improve schedules/schedule flexibility (1.4%); People need to be more kind/fair to each other (1.2%); Create more advancement opportunities (0.8%); Adhere to higher quality standards (0.6%); Public Relations (0.6%); More in-house projects (0.5%); “Other” other (7.3%).

**Other Notes:** “AMHS Specific” includes comments such as “Improve schedules, fares, service,” and “Run ships like a business.” “Hire more qualified people” includes comments such as “Don’t promote based on favoritism.”

# Respondent Demographics

| 11. In which DOT&PF region do you work? | Percent of Respondents |
|---|------------------------|
| Northern                                | 28%                    |
| Central                                 | 35                     |
| Southeast                               | 27                     |
| Headquarters                            | 7                      |
| Other                                   | 2                      |

| 12. Which of the following best describes the type of work you do? | Percent of Respondents |
|--|------------------------|
| Maintenance or Construction  | 29%                    |
| Administrative or Financial  | 20                     |
| Planning or Engineering  | 19                     |
| Managerial or Coordinating   | 13                     |
| Information or Technology  | 6                      |
| Other – AMHS Related   | 9                      |
| Other – Police, Fire or Safety                                     | 3                      |
| Other  | 2                      |

The next table shows that the distribution of survey respondents across operating units is reasonably close to the actual distribution of all DOT&PF workers. The table shows the percentage of respondents represented by each operating unit compared with the percentage of all DOT&PF workers represented by that operating unit. For example, 6 percent of survey respondents came from the combination of Central Region Construction, Project Control, and Contracting. This combination of units represents 5% of all DOT&PF workers. The biggest difference in representation was AMHS vessel employees. They made up 13% of respondents, but are 26% of DOT&PF workers. The lower response among vessel employees was unavoidable due to their lack of ready access to the internet survey site.

| 13. Which best describes your Operating Unit within DOT&PF?                             | Percent of Those Responding to the Survey | Percent of All DOT&PF Workers |
|---|---|-------------------------------|
| Central Region Construction, Project Control, Contracting                               | 6%  | 5%                            |
| Central Region Preconstruction - D&ES   | 8   | 5                             |
| Central Region Facilities   | < 1                                       | < 1                           |
| Central Region Highways & Aviation  | 5   | 6                             |
| Central Region Planning, Support Services, Regional Directors Office                    | 2   | < 1                           |
| Northern Region Construction & Project Control  | 4   | 4                             |
| Northern Region Preconstruction - D&ES  | 5   | 3                             |
| Northern Region Facilities  | 2   | 1                             |
| Northern Region Highways & Aviation   | 9   | 9                             |
| Northern Region Planning, Support Services, Regional Directors Office                   | 3   | 2                             |
| Southeast Construction  | 1   | 2                             |
| Southeast Preconstruction - D&ES  | 4   | 2                             |
| Southeast Region Highways & Aviation and Facilities                                     | 1   | 2                             |
| Southeast Region Planning, Project Control, Support Services, Regional Directors Office | < 1                                       | < 1                           |
| Commissioner's Office   | 2   | < 1                           |
| EEO/Civil Rights  | < 1                                       | < 1                           |
| Statewide Aviation  | < 1                                       | < 1                           |
| Admin Services, Information Systems, Procurement  | 5   | 2                             |
| Statewide Design & Engineering Services   | 3   | 2                             |
| Measurement Standards & Commercial Vehicle Enforcement                                  | 3   | 2                             |
| Program Development   | 2   | 1                             |
| State Equipment Fleet   | 5   | 5                             |
| Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport   | 7   | 10                            |
| Fairbanks International Airport   | 2   | 3                             |
| AMHS - Shoreside  | 6   | 5                             |
| AMHS - Vessel Employees   | 13  | 26                            |
| Other   | < 1                                       | < 1                           |
| <b>Total number of employees</b>  | <b>1,372*</b>                             | <b>3,478</b>                  |

\* Includes Incomplete Surveys.

| 14. What is your age? | Percent of Those Responding to the Survey | Percent of all DOT&PF Workers |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Under 30              | 8%  | 17%                           |
| 30 to 39              | 17  | 18                            |
| 40 to 49              | 31  | 37                            |
| 50 to 59              | 38  | 25                            |
| 60 or over            | 6   | 3                             |
| <b>Average Age</b>    | <b>46.3 years</b>                         | <b>42.1 years</b>             |

| 15. What is your gender? | Percent of Those Responding to the Survey | Percent of all DOT&PF Workers |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
| Female                   | 33%                                       | 25%                           |
| Male                     | 67  | 75                            |

| 16. How many years have you worked at DOT? | Percent of Those Responding to the Survey |
|--|---|
| 0 to 4 years                               | 34%                                       |
| 5 to 9 years                               | 25  |
| 10 to 19                                   | 23  |
| 20 or more                                 | 17  |
| <b>Average Length of Employment</b>        | <b>10.1 years</b>                         |

| 17. What Retirement Tier are you? | Percent of Those Responding to the Survey |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Tier I                            | 27%                                       |
| Tier II                           | 24  |
| Tier III                          | 42  |
| Tier IV                           | 6   |